THE EYE:

BY OBADIAH OPTIC.

——*VARIOUS OBJECTS FROM THE SENSE,*
VARIOUSLY REPRESENTING. *MILTON.*

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"*Love one another.*"

AT this season of the year, when the wants of the poor begin to be severely felt, I think we cannot employ our thoughts on a better subject than *benevolence;* I trust therefore my readers will not be displeased with the following serious essay on the practice and nature of that exalted virtue.

When we consider the state of man in this world, follow him through all his various stages, from the cradle to the tomb, behold him surrounded with troubles, the prey of disease, his body racked with pains, his mind with foreboding anxieties—this moment, abounding in wealth and wallowing in luxury—the next, depressed by the heavy hand of unfeeling poverty to the hard bed and scanty table; unaided by divine religion, we would be apt to conclude that man was not formed by a BEING of infinite *benevolence*, who designed him for interminable happiness: But, illuminated by that light from Heaven, we can clearly see that those providences, which we have called adverse, his strokes, chastisements, and judgments, are blessings in disguise. Religion teaches us resignation to his most holy will, the real design of all his dispensations, and produces in us that holy temper of mind which was evinced by the venerable ELI, when he said, It is the LORD let HIM do, as unto HIM seemeth good.

It is not good for man to be alone, said GOD, in the day of his creation, and experience from that to the present moment, has declared, in a voice which has sounded from the rising to the setting sun, Holy and just and true are thy words, O thou FORMER of man!

Our mutual weaknesses require mutual aid; our wants call for assistance, our poverty incites compassion, our pains pity—happiness calls forth smiling joy, and prosperity affords

the means of diffusing contentment, of bringing the oil and the balm to the house of the distressed, of binding up the wounded, and causing the broken-hearted, the depressed, the desponding, once more with grateful soul to listen to the voice of heavenly religion.

Before the glorious light of Christianity shone on our world, the great and intimate relationship that one man bears to another was but dimly seen. Some enlightened philosophers, it is true, gave precepts of exalted philanthropy; but still, in these precepts, when rightly understood, the terms were generally limited to their own sect or nation, and did not embrace the whole human family. It remained for Christianity to take away the covering from the face of all nations, to break down their separating walls, to declare the sublime doctrine, That GOD had made of one blood all nations of men that dwell on the face of the earth; and that being his offspring, we were all brethren. By these heavenly truths, the soul of man was elevated—she looked through the clouds of ignorance and mists of error, in which she had been enveloped for ages, she saw her heavenly FATHER sitting on the circle of the universe, diffusing, with infinite benevolence, his blessings on his offspring, and proclaiming in a voice majestic, yet parental, LOVE ONE ANOTHER—FOR ALL YE ARE BRETHREN.*

Love is that affection of the mind which desires either its own individual happiness, or the happiness of others. When individual happiness is its object, it is justly defined self-love; when the happiness of others, it is properly called charity, or benevolence, and in this sense I mean to consider it.

The object of this noble affection, is the general good; and its effects are diffusing happiness, relieving from the power of evil, preventing its operation, and healing the wounds that adversity has inflicted; and it performs these by instructing the ignorant, encouraging the desponding, strengthening the hands of the well-disposed, admonishing the thoughtless, the giddy and the vain, bearing patiently with the inattentive, and rebuking with gentleness.

This virtue, when exercised by the rich and powerful, is most beautifully delineated by JOB, answering the accusations of his censorious friends—"When the ear heard me, then it blessed me, when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me; because I delivered the poor that cried, the fatherless and him

* Compare John xv. 17. with Matth. xxiii. 8.

who had none to help: The blessing of him who was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy: I put on righteousness and it clothed me; my judgment was to me a robe and a diadem: I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame: I was a father to the poor; and the cause which I knew not, I searched out; and I break the jaw of the wicked and plucked the spoil out of his teeth."

But the practice of benevolence belongs not exclusively to the rich and opulent; the small offering from the sympathising heart, the widow's mite, and the drink of cold water, are as strong marks of that heavenly virtue operating on the heart and influencing the conduct, as the splendent offering of those who, out of their abundance offer much—nor is it confined to age, sex, or denomination: It is a stream from that infinitely flowing fountain, which causes every intelligence to rejoice. The Jew finds its operation in the actions of the pitiful hearted Samaritan, when he pours in the wine and the oil, binds up the wounds, carefully guards, and defrays his expenses—the Christian sees it shining conspicuously in every true disciple of his exalted MASTER—the Indian exhibits it in his humble hut, when he spreads the bed of skins, and treats the wandering stranger with unbounded hospitality.

Neither is it confined to our *friends* only; the nations, before the commencement of the Christian dispensation, universally failed on this part of our subject; for to *their friends*, and those in amity with them, the influence of this virtue was in a great degree limited: Love your friend and hate your enemy, was one of their favourite precepts: But the divine AUTHOR of our religion gave precepts very different, Love your ENEMIES, do good to them that *hate* you, and pray for them that *despitefully* use you and *persecute* you. Nor did this divine benevolence appear in his precept only, it shone with surpassing lustre in his glorious example, when he, in the midst of his enemies (suspended on the cross) racked with intolerable pain, which was still made more excruciating by the mockings and revilings of the most unfeeling monsters; yet his meek and benevolent spirit rose superiour to all their infernal rage, he prayed, FATHER forgive them, for they know not what they do!—

It is much to be lamented, that we are all more ready to profess than to perform; all are ready to subscribe to the excellence of the precept, Love one another: But view the prac-

tice of men in every age, and we would almost be induced to say, they had undoubtedly read the precept, *Hate one another*, for all ye are enemies.—When we behold armies led to the field, prepared with every instrument of death which fertile invention and skilful ingenuity can construct to murder and destroy—when we follow them to the fatal field, and behold them mad with rage, engaging for each other's destruction—when we hear the clash of their arms, the shout of triumph, and the groans of the dying—when we see the youth who a few hours ago, was beheld as the ornament of society, lying pale in the arms of death, the blood streaming from his ghastly wound—when we hear the distracted widow rending the air with her lamentations over the body of her lately so accomplished and brave, now mangled and lifeless husband, is it not fair to conclude, that such are Christians only in name?—that they never were acquainted with the beauty, the simplicity, the divine spirit of Christianity!—My GOD! how lamentable it is! that thy rational creatures, for a few handfuls of glittering dross, a few acres of territory, a town, a city, a fishing-place, a title of honour, or an accidental affront, should unsheathe the sword, kindle the torch of destruction, dye their hands in the blood of their brethren, and consign nations to all the horrors of war!—O, may that happy period soon commence, when the voice of divine benevolence shall be heard from shore to shore—when the clangor of war, murderous war, shall no longer be heard;—when man shall meet his brother man, no longer accoutred in arms, determined on destruction; but pronouncing, as it were with one heart and one tongue, We WILL love one another, for truly we are brethren.

(to be concluded)

SELECTED.

THE BOOKSELLER AND AUTHORS:

A LITERARY DIALOGUE.

(concluded from page 249.)

Enter a second Author.

2*d. Auth.* A good morning, dear sir. I presume you are Mr. Decimo Sexto?

Books. I am sir. *(bowing)*

2*d. Auth.* It's fortunate I've met with you, sir, as I wanted to take your opinion with respect to a work which is, as I may say, a maiden effusion.

Books. Which you want married to the press, put into sheets, &c.

2d. Auth. Though jocular, Mr. Decimo Sexto, you are certainly right; but as, in the Athenian style, I expect a portion on giving the bride. But to be serious: I should be much obliged to you if you would read this work, which is moral, political, and philosophical.

Books. Moral, political, and philosophical?

2d. Auth. Yes. I want your opinion, and your terms; therefore, in order that you may form your judgment, I'll leave it with you to read.

Books. To read! absurd! that's the old-fashioned way! I have a surer criterion to form my judgment. Take off your hat.

2d. Auth. I did not know it was necessary to pay you this mark of respect in a public shop.

Books. Respect! nonsense! I want to see your skull.

2d. Auth. My skull!

Books. Yes! Whether it is depressed or elevated. Is this wig from——

2d. Auth. Do you mean to affront me; this is a *natural*——

Books. Well! take it off, however; let me measure your cranium; it seems the *sutures* have never been properly closed. I'm afraid to have any thing to do with your work?

2d. Auth. Why?

Books. I am fearful that some of those volatile thoughts, those effusions of fancy, which we call *flights*, may have evaporated.

2d. Auth. Impossible; because I aways write in a double night cap.

Books. Perhaps if your readers were to take the hint it would not be amiss. You know Swift says, they should always, if possible, place themselves in the situation of the author. Well! I see no great objection to your work from any observation I can make upon your skull. Perhaps if the learned Dr. Gall were here, he would say it was *too long*.

2d. Auth. Is that and objection.

Books. I think not: I would rather have a *long-headed* author than a *round head*. I am afraid there are still too many of those in the country.

2d. Auth. Perhaps that's the reason why you examine the cranium instead of the work?

Books. Certainly, I like to revert to first principles, to fathom the mine before I look at the ore, the type before the figure, the soil before its productions, the———

2d. Auth. This is ingenious!

Books. It is; and so useful, that I intend to have all my authors' heads cast in plaister, or papier machee, or brass, or models of them—when they are mere nobs, turned in wood, and set them in the windows as they do busts in hair-dressers' shops, so that every passenger may become a *reviewer*.

2d. Auth. A lucky thought!

Books. I shall carry it still further; like Snip, my taylor, I shall never stir without a *measure* in my pocket. I intend as the high German doctor has given the hint, not only to guage the capacity of my authors' skulls, but the dimensions of those of my customers.

2d. Auth. But you may affront the latter if you make free with what Hogarth used to call their *idea boxes*.

Books. Indeed! I shall then go another way to work with them.

2d. Auth. How?

Books. I shall apply to their hatters and peruke-makers; this you know refers to either sex. By the depth of the *crown* or the *caul*, I shall soon be able to judge of the *depth* of the wearers; and by observing the expense which they bestow upon the outside of their heads, I shall not be able to determine the value they set upon them, but pretty accurately to conjecture, what kind of works they would deem necessary to ornament their inside. Whether they delight in botanical writings, which may be deemed *flowered paper*, some of which by-the-bye, is as highly coloured as the fair readers; whether landscapes in black and white please them; whether they would have them adorned with history, maps, sea pieces, domestic scenes, love stories, emblematical figures, representations of the muses, the arts, scripture pieces, and a hundred other subjects.

2d. Auth. Upon my word Mr. Decimo Sexto, this is a science equally new and ingenious. You'll open the doors of your authors' and customers' craniums, and form a chart of the whirlpools, eddies, shoals, and shallows of their minds.

Books. Yes! I shall soon be able to ascertain the place of every passion; I shall, as you observe, open their skulls, and fold them up as I do these papers.

2d. *Auth.* Bless me! What, are you about, Mr. Sexto? You'll tear my manuscript to tatters.

Books. Adso! I beg ten thousand pardons; though it would, had it become a fragment, only have made it the more valuable. What shall I do with it? Put it to the press?

2d. *Auth.* Pay me for it, and put it where you please.

Books. Pay you for it! though I like the structure of your skull, this demands consideration. If you call in a few days you shall have an answer: I'm like literature, going backward: You see I am not one of your costive critics. You'll excuse me. Good morning.

[*Exit* AUTHOR *one way*, BOOKSELLER *another*.

SELECTED.

A METAMORPHOSIS.

IN a college of a celebrated university, lived Dr. Pantaphonos, a celebrated character. He was an eminent classic, distinguished for his profound erudition, and could go through the paradigma of a contracted verb, with all its different dialects, as fluently as a child ten years of age. He could trace the derivation of nouns to their primitive source, with the greatest accuracy. He could tell at what period, how many years before or after CHRIST, lived the greatest men; those who might be justly styled the '*clarissima lumina mundi*,' the brightest luminaries of the world; I mean the poets, historians, and ethic writers—the famous philosophers, whether of Stoic, Cynic, or Epicurean sect; whether followers of Crattippus, Diogenes, or Epicurus, or the divine Plato. He was as a critic, justly entitled, by his superiour abilities, with many others of the same class, to hold 'a farthing candle to the sun.' He could prove, by incontestible evidence, that the world was not square; that man was an animal; that the Romans and Grecians eat, drank, and slept, like the moderns; that death is the common lot of all mankind; he understood the nature of solids and fluids, extension and power, innate and complex ideas; was an advocate for the unalterable rule of right, and laws of virtue, as defined by the immortal Stagyrite, and could hold forth three hours on the following subject, and prove, by the most superiour arguments, that virtue is amiable and vice odious. He would argue, frequently, until he foamed at the mouth, and might be taken by the by-standers for a madman, and would almost convince his unfortunate hearers, that they

were not really existing, as he particulary excelled in the sceptic philosophy; his favourite dogma, however was, that men could effect any thing they took in hand, by this mode of reasoning, '*possunt quia posse videntur.*'

In mathematics he could take the altitudes of monuments or high places, as he walked along the streets. In matters of theology, he was so deep, that the could barely be comprehended by vulgar minds or common understandings. Indeed, he frequently soared into the regions of indefinable obscurity, which some people might take for sublimity. In his religious duties he was very punctilious—superstitious in the extreme, believed in ghosts, and did voluntary peñance, we are told, once for a whole day, in the market-place, bareheaded, for having disobliged his father;—a rare instance of filial affection and duty, scarcely to be equalled in modern times, I am afraid.

After having been sixteen years in acquiring a knowledge of the dead languages, and three years at the university, he was still unfit for the company of the greater part of mankind, and totally so for the agreeable society of women; for he was impetuous, and overbearing, and had not the least polish or elegance of manners or person to recommend him. On the contrary, his forbidding exterior bespoke him what he really was; and, notwithstanding he had written a dissertation on dephlogisticated matter, and entered into the most important religious, political and polemical discourses, and had discovered the source of the river Nile on paper, could converse and write fluently in Arabic, Syriac, and seven other oriental languages; notwithstanding all these qualities, I repeat, and his pomp of diction and solemnity of manner in delivery, he was avoided, and ridicule or incredulity was sure to follow what he asserted. To sum up the whole, this living lexicon, this *Clavis Homerica*, this index of all languages, found his learning of little or no use.

He perceived, at length, that he was universally despised, and his company shunned, or whenever he had the good fortune to be invited to dine with a great man whose vices he had flattered in a pompous dedication, made the butt and laughing stock of his patron.—He would have blushed if he could, but habit had rendered him superiour to all emotions of this kind. This treatment, however, proved, at last, very disagreeable, and he offered up a prayer to Minerva, his tutelar goddess, to protect him from insults which were more

than man could bear. His prayer was not unheard, and that goddess, after debating with herself whether she should transform the unhappy pedant into a bear or an owl, suffered him to take the form of the latter. Still Pantaphonos nearly resembles what he was when a man. He looks big, and seldom speaks—avoids the society of men, and loves the haunts of aged monasteries mouldering into dust. He is heard frequently amongst these ruins of antiquity, to make his mournful complaints to the moon, to whose influence it is supposed he was frequently subject before his transformation—for under the shape of an owl he remains the object of hatred and persecution. The smaller birds pursue him, and scoff at him in the day-time, in the same manner as he was ridiculed by epigrammatists, when he bore the human form. Still Pantaphonos continues to disturb society with his hootings, and frequently infests the retired seats of learning.

Poetical Department.

ORIGINAL.

EVENING MEDITATIONS.

A SERIOUS POEM.

BENEATH the western horizon is hid
The lustrous orb of vivifying light,
And eve in russet garb, with dewy tears,
Mourns, pensively, the absence of his beams;
Whilst nature silent, melancholy mild,
Excites the soul to meditation sweet.—
Tho' now the music of the grove no more
Is undulated in the sighing gale,
Nor lulls the passions of the ruffled mind,
Nor soothes the sorrows of the human breast—
Yet I would mingle in the floating breeze,
A song of praise devotionally pure,
Whilst Echo in the mountain cell, recluse,
Responsively should touch the unseen lyre,
And swell the sacred melody to Heav'n.

Tho' now obscured the glory of the day,
Innum'rous brilliant witnesses appear,

To praise that BEING whose omniscient pow'r
Bade them to shine and cheer our favour'd earth:
Not so ere chaos into order sprang;
Not so in *Egypt* when her monarch proud,
Provoked the wrath of HIM who marks the spheres,
And at whose will or light or darkness reigns;
Not so when the REDEEMER of mankind
Expired upon the cross on *Calv'ry's* mount—
Well might the sun be hid in tenfold night,
The moon, astonish'd, shrink in darkness deep,
And stars, dismay'd, refuse their silv'ry rays!
Well might creation tremble at the deed,
And flinty rocks burst adamantine bonds!—
—Accursed by man, he died that man might live!
And by this sacrifice what blessings flow
To our frail race—our sins on him were laid!—
—The MORNING STAR of everlasting day,
He rose to animate and bless the world,
Restore what sin had blighted, and to give
New life and heav'nly hope to drooping souls.

The mountain's tow'ring summit seems to pierce
The lucid sky and ope th' ærial world—
(Just emblem of proud man in darkness veil'd)
Lo, clouds surround it, and the twinkling stars
Shed but a feeble lustre on its brow;
'Tis all appearance, far from the bright field
Its top sublime is veil'd in dusky mists:
So man high-raised in self-opinion stands,
To error wedded, he deceives himself
By vain imaginations, still averse
To light divine, he trusts to nature's light;
Encompass'd with the clouds of doubt, pursues
Maxims unsanction'd by th' OMNISCIENT'S rule:
Vain man, in infidelity grown bold!
Can reason guide thee in the path of life?
What if deep science, bright philosophy,
And sweet morality should all combine
To build a tow'ring height from earth to Heav'n—
Still would th' attempt be folly in HIS sight
Who sits upon the uncreated throne,
And rules omnipotent the worlds HE made;

Nor human skill concentred can devise
A mean to ope the everlasting doors
And gain admission to the realms of bliss;
The precious key t' unlock the gates of life,
Is the REDEEMER's free and matchless love—
This treasure, in the humble soul, exceeds
The noblest pow'rs of bold aspiring man.

A solemn pensiveness pervades the plain,
Nor human voice disturbs the air of night;
Nought but the croaking water-frog is heard,
The buzzing beetle with discordant hum,
The cricket with unpleasant chirp and shrill,
The owl with shriek terrific in the gloom,
Join their jargonic notes in concert dull:—
The cascade foaming from the rocky steep,
Incessant falling with tremendous roar,
Strikes awfully majestic on the ear:—
Thus th' imperious tyrant raised to pow'r,
Ambitious swells, till o'er the horrid cliff
Of self-sufficiency he falls, disgraced—
Not like the stream which from the torrent fed,
Meanders calmly thro' the sylvan bow'rs,
Its margin verdant, its delightful banks
Adorn'd with flow'rs and shrubs and fruitful trees:—
Thus did the *CHIEF*, our country's pride, retire
From cares of state, to tranquil scenes of life:
O, *WASHINGTON!* thy mem'ry still shall live,
Whilst patriotism has a name on earth;
Fame shall resound thy worth whilst time endures,
And *love* inscribe it on each freeman's heart.

Whilst here I meditate with mind serene,
Enveloped with the mantle of grey night,
Each sublunary object half obscured—
E'en now what num'rous beings, tho' unseen,
Commission'd by the great SUPREME, attend,
To screen from evils, which might else assail,
And hurl me quick to black oblivious night:
O, rapt'rous thought! that we are angels' care,
Whilst listlessly we walk where dangers lurk!
What cause of grateful thanks, that fearful night
Can't hide us from the providence of GOD:

But ah! a nobler motive still excites
The grateful soul to love, adore, and trust—
Exalted high in Heav'n the SAVIOUR lives:
HE lives and reigns who once for sinners died!
Nor does he live regardless of our wants,
He knows our nature, and his love displays,
In gifts unspeakable to those who feel
Their int'rest in his never-ceasing love:
Tho' warring elements destructive frown,
And earth tremendous to its centre shake,
Secure of Heav'n, the Christian's soul aspires
To the serene abode where angels dwell,
And sing hosannas to the PRINCE OF PEACE;
His joys are boundless, unconfined to spheres,
They rise on wings of faith nor light on earth:
O, for that gratitude whose flowing tide,
Would bear my best affections to my GOD!

Lo! now sublime, enrobed in light appears,
From orient couch slow rising, the fair moon;
It mellow radiance gilds the lonely scene,
And shadows move reluctantly away:—
So hope beams cheerfulness upon the mind,
Meliorates the heart, and boding fears,
Like evening shades, fly the resplendent gleam.

But whilst I muse, time speeds its rapid flight,
The faithful clock resounds the passing hour,
And animated nature's sunk to rest;
I too must heed the signal for repose:—
But, grateful ever would my heart expand,
And bless the GOD of providence, whose care
Extends to all the creatures of his pow'r;
All living have from his exhaustless store,
Their being, sustentation, and their joys;
His love embraces man, and glorious shines
In his redemption—O, illustr'ous love!
The wond'rous theme of angels and of men!
O, for a spark of that pure heav'nly fire,
Which grace divine would kindle to a flame,
A glowing flame which should my soul revive,
And my cold heart dissolve in humble praise.

ALICIAN.